ACADEMIC JOURNAL VOL.1.0- ISSUE 2

OXBRIDGE®

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

A COMMON GROUND FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

0000-0000

ACADEMIC JOURNAL VOL.1.0- ISSUE 2

OXBRIDGE®

A COMMON GROUND FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Editorial Board (Primarily an Editorial Group)

Editor-in-Chief:

- Asst. Prof. Dr. Ferhat Atik-0009-0008-9089-9051
- Dize Sidal, MSc, Psychologist-0009-0002-8830-4975

Editorial Members:

- Assc. Prof. Dr. Khorshed Alam-0000-0002-5124-4895
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Chao-Fu Yang-0000-0003-0777-5514
- Spec. Dr. Reyhan Toyran, MD-0000-0002-3344-915X
- Dr. Mayra Rodríguez Ruiz-0000-0001-8953-4583
- Dr. Mehmet Selhanoglu, MD-0009-0006-2463-4755
- Dr. Beste Zakoglu, Economist-0009-0000-3448-2077
- Dr. Margareta Sandström-0000-0002-8707-5157
- Dr. Serpil Malkoc, Biochemist
- Sezi Sidal, LL.B.-0009-0004-4087-616X
- Okan Oktay, Anthropologist

Special Policies

Editorial Integrity and Ethical Standards: Oxbridge Publishing UK is committed to academic integrity, editorial independence, and transparency. All publishing activities are conducted in accordance with internationally recognized standards of scholarly publishing ethics.

Plagiarism and Research Misconduct: All submissions are assessed for plagiarism and ethical compliance. Data fabrication, data falsification, improper citation, duplicate publication, and self-plagiarism are strictly prohibited. Suspected misconduct is subject to editorial investigation and may result in rejection or retraction.

Authorship and Responsibility: Authorship is based on substantial academic and intellectual contribution. Gift authorship, ghost authorship, and any form of misrepresentation of contribution are not permitted. All listed authors share responsibility for the content of the publication.

Conflict of Interest: Authors, editors, and reviewers must disclose any potential conflicts of interest that could influence editorial decisions. Failure to disclose relevant conflicts may lead to suspension of the evaluation process.

Peer Review and Editorial Decision-Making: For peer-reviewed publications, editorial decisions are made independently and solely on academic merit. Decisions are not influenced by authors' institutional affiliation, academic status, nationality, or personal relationships.

Corrections, Retractions, and Editorial Notices: When significant errors or ethical issues are identified after publication, appropriate editorial actions—such as corrections, retractions, or editorial notices—are issued. These notices remain permanently linked to the original publication.

Permanent Access and Archiving Policy: Oxbridge Publishing UK ensures permanent access to all published content. Stable publication URLs are maintained, and redirection is applied in cases of technical or infrastructural change. Content is not removed; instead, archival integrity is preserved through editorial documentation.

Transparency and Accountability: All publication policies are publicly available. Complaints and appeals are handled by the editorial board in a documented and accountable manner. Oxbridge Publishing UK recognizes its responsibility to the academic community and upholds transparency throughout the publishing process.

OXBRIDGE® PUBLISHING UK International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

PRODUCING WITHIN INVISIBLE BARRIERS: STRUCTURAL EXCLUSION, GLOBAL INTEGRATION, AND ENGINEERING PRACTICE IN NORTHERN CYPRUS (REVISED WITH VERIFIED CITATIONS)

Eralp Curcioğlu
Eastern Mediterranean University
Faculty of Engineering
Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering
Email: eralp.curcioglu@gmail.com
ORCID: 0009-0003-5616-2658

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the structural conditions shaping engineering practice and production in Northern Cyprus within the broader context of global transformation. While technological advancement has enabled unprecedented levels of connectivity and integration worldwide, participation in these systems remains uneven. Drawing on theories of network society, power, and symbolic recognition, the article argues that the challenges faced by Turkish Cypriot engineers and firms are not rooted in a lack of technical capability but in systemic barriers that restrict access, visibility, and validation within global infrastructures. Conceptualized as “invisible barriers,” these constraints operate not through direct prohibition but through limitations on recognition, institutional legitimacy, and infrastructural integration. The study demonstrates that such conditions lead to a form of detoured participation, where actors engage with global systems indirectly and under constrained circumstances. Furthermore, it examines how these structural limitations are internalized, shaping self-perception and reinforcing exclusion. By situating the case of Northern Cyprus within broader debates on globalization and structural inequality, the article highlights the need to rethink participation not only in terms of production capacity but also in relation to systemic access and recognition. Ultimately, the study contributes to the literature by offering a conceptual framework for understanding how global inequalities are reproduced through subtle yet persistent structural mechanisms.

Keywords: structural exclusion, global integration, invisible barriers, network society, engineering practice, northern cyprus

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past four decades, the world has undergone a profound transformation driven by technological advancement. Engineering has evolved beyond the production of physical artifacts into the integration of digital systems, data infrastructures, and global communication networks. As Manuel Castells argues, contemporary society is structured as a "network society" in which power and productivity are organized through interconnected nodes rather than isolated units (Castells, 2010). Within this system, inclusion depends not merely on capability but on the ability to connect.However, this transformation has not been experienced equally across all societies. While globalization is often framed as a universalizing force, it simultaneously produces zones of inclusion and exclusion. As Joseph Stiglitz emphasizes, globalization has frequently failed to deliver equitable participation, instead reinforcing asymmetries between those integrated into global systems and those structurally marginalized (Stiglitz, 2002).

The case of the Turkish Cypriot community illustrates this asymmetry. The challenges faced by engineers and firms in Northern Cyprus are not reducible to technical limitations. Rather, they reflect a condition in which actors possess the capacity to produce but lack full access to the systems through which production becomes visible, validated, and scalable.

This article conceptualizes this condition as structural exclusion through invisible barriers—constraints that do not necessarily prohibit action but limit the conditions under which action becomes globally meaningful.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: NETWORKS, POWER, AND STRUCTURAL EXCLUSION

Global systems operate through networks that selectively include and exclude actors. According to Castells (2010), the key feature of the network society is that "inclusion or exclusion from networks determines the fate of individuals, groups, and societies." This insight is critical: exclusion is not always explicit; it often takes the form of disconnection.

This perspective aligns with Saskia Sassen's analysis of global assemblages. Sassen (2006) argues that globalization produces highly selective spaces of inclusion, where certain actors gain access to global flows while others remain peripheral. These dynamics are not accidental but structurally embedded.

From a power perspective, Michel Foucault provides a crucial lens. Foucault (1980) conceptualizes power not as repression but as a productive force that shapes what is possible, visible, and legitimate. In this sense, power operates by structuring the field of action itself. In the case of Northern Cyprus, the issue is not prohibition but the limitation of possibilities.

Furthermore, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power helps explain how structural exclusion becomes internalized. Bourdieu (1991) shows that power operates through recognition and legitimacy; actors who lack recognition within dominant systems are effectively marginalized, regardless of their actual capabilities.

Thus, structural exclusion can be defined as a condition in which:

- actors possess competence
- but lack systemic recognition and integration

This distinction shifts the analytical focus from internal deficiency to external constraint.

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

3. GLOBAL INTEGRATION AND THE PROBLEM OF ACCESS

Participation in global systems requires more than production. It depends on infrastructure, recognition, and connectivity. As Mark Graham and William H. Dutton note, access to the internetand digital networks is unevenly distributed, and this unevenness shapes who can participate meaningfully in the global economy (Graham & Dutton, 2019).

In Northern Cyprus, these inequalities manifest in concrete ways:

- difficulties in institutional verification
- limited access to global financial systems
- constraints in logistics and direct trade
- barriers to participation in international platforms

These are not abstract issues; they directly affect the ability of firms and engineers to operate globally.

As a result, actors often rely on indirect mechanisms—intermediaries, third countries, and informal networks. This creates what can be described as detoured integration, where participation is possible but never fully direct.

4. ENGINEERING UNDER STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINT

Engineering practice in Northern Cyprus must be understood within this context of constrained integration. Engineers are not only solving technical problems but also navigating systemic limitations.

Despite these constraints, significant work continues to be produced. However, as Rob Kitchin emphasizes, in contemporary societies, visibility is increasingly tied to data and infrastructure (Kitchin, 2014). If production is not integrated into global data and information systems, it remains effectively invisible.

This creates a paradox:

- production exists
- but recognition does not

This invisibility distorts external perceptions and reinforces exclusion.

5. INTERNALIZATION AND SYMBOLIC EFFECTS

Structural exclusion does not remain external; it becomes internalized. When actors repeatedly encounter barriers, these barriers may be reinterpreted as personal or collective limitations. Bourdieu (1991) explains this process as symbolic domination, where external structures shape internal dispositions. In Northern Cyprus, expressions such as “we cannot compete” or “we lack capacity” reflect not objective reality but internalized structural conditions.

This internalization is one of the most powerful effects of invisible barriers, as it reproduces exclusion even in the absence of direct constraint.

6. INVISIBLE BARRIERS AS AN ONTOLOGICAL CONDITION

Invisible barriers are not merely practical obstacles; they shape the conditions of existence within global systems. They determine: a. What can be recognized, b. What can circulate, 3. What can scale In this sense, they constitute an ontological condition.

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

As Martin Heidegger suggests, technology is not just a tool but a way of revealing the world (Heidegger, 1977). If access to technological systems is limited, then the very structure of what can be revealed—and therefore what can exist socially—is also limited.
Thus, the issue is not the absence of capability, but the restriction of the conditions under which capability becomes real in the global sense.

7. CONCLUSION

This study has demonstrated that the challenges faced by engineers and firms in Northern Cyprus are not rooted in a lack of competence but in structural exclusion from global systems.
Drawing on Castells, Foucault, Bourdieu, Sassen, and others, the analysis shows that invisible barriers operate through disconnection, lack of recognition, and limited access to infrastructures.
These barriers do not prevent production; they shape its visibility and scalability.
Despite these constraints, significant capacity exists. The problem is not the absence of potential, but the conditions under which that potential can be realized.
Ultimately, achieving meaningful participation in global systems requires not only technical development but structural inclusion.
Until such inclusion is realized, production will continue—but within boundaries that are not always visible, yet always operative.

REFERENCES

Bourdieu, P. (1991). Language and symbolic power. Harvard University Press. ISBN: 9780674516717
Castells, M. (2010). The rise of the network society (2nd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN: 9781405196864
Foucault, M. (1980). Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972–1977. Pantheon Books. ISBN: 9780394739540
Graham, M., & Dutton, W. H. (2019). Society and the Internet: How networks of information and communication are changing our lives (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780198843498Heidegger, M. (1977). The question concerning technology and other essays. Harper & Row. ISBN:
9780061319693
Kitchin, R. (2014). The data revolution: Big data, open data, data infrastructures and their consequences. Sage. ISBN: 9781473902510
Sassen, S. (2006). Territory, authority, rights: From medieval to global assemblages. Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691138596
Stiglitz, J. E. (2002). Globalization and its discontents. W. W. Norton & Company. ISBN: 9780393324396
van Dijck, J. (2013). The culture of connectivity: A critical history of social media. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199970773.001.0001

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

Publication Ethics and Policies

Oxbridge Publishing UK, adheres to internationally recognized standards of publication ethics.

- Plagiarism Policy
All submissions undergo thorough plagiarism screening. Manuscripts with unethical similarity are rejected or returned for revision, ensuring originality and credibility.

- Conflict of Interest
Authors, editors, and reviewers must disclose any potential conflicts of interest to ensure transparency and maintain the integrity and credibility of the publication process.

- Corrections and Retractions
In cases of significant error or ethical violation, corrections or retraction notices are published and permanently linked to the original publication.

- Permanent Access Policy
Published works are maintained with stable URLs. Content removal is avoided; instead, editorial notices are issued where necessary.

Our Promise

Our publishing company is dedicated to supporting high-quality, original, and ethical scholarly work through the publication of academic journals and scholarly e-books. All publications are developed and released in accordance with internationally recognized academic publishing standards.
Our editorial processes are built on rigorous peer review, plagiarism screening, conflict of interest disclosure, and a strong commitment to academic integrity. Each published work is supported by clear and structured metadata, hosted on stable landing pages, and maintained with a long-term commitment to accessibility and preservation.

The reliability, traceability, and sustainability of scholarly content lie at the core of our publishing philosophy. We aim to ensure that every work we publish contributes lasting value to the global scholarly communication ecosystem through visibility, citability, and enduring academic relevance.

Contact

Email: info@oxbridgepublishinguk.com
Office: 2 dickens road Coventry cv6 2jt - United Kingdom
Message Center: https://bit.ly/44Pms6e
Web: www.oxbridgepublishinguk.com
Editor-in-chief: Asst. Prof. Dr. Ferhat Atik - ferhatatik@me.com

GOV.UK
We are an inclusive workplace. Please email us about any adjustments you may need.

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ACADEMIC JOURNAL VOL.1.0- ISSUE 2

OXBRIDGE®

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

A COMMON GROUND FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY SCHOLARSHIP

Copyright © OXBRIDGE UK - International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

0000-0000